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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 29, 1987

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**EUROPEAN COMPUTER USERS EXPECT
BOTH HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE MAINTENANCE PRICES TO INCREASE**

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA, OCTOBER 29, 1987 - A new report from INPUT, a leading computer and communications industry market research firm analyses the movement of maintenance prices for mainframes and minicomputers during 1986 and 1987 as well as customer expectations in this area in the country markets of France, Germany, Italy, the U.K., Holland, and Scandinavia.

The report, titled Customer Service Pricing for Europe - 1987, gives an overview of those changes in technology (such as the greater processing power and faster response time of hardware, the development of error logging software and fault databases, and a marked growth in networking into mainframes and minis), as well as changes in the market itself (rapid growth of applications, critical user dependence on 100% system availability, request for quality registration by government, etc.) which affect the pricing issue.

Examination of the level of customer satisfaction with, and importance attached by users to, maintenance costs (both hardware and software related) shows considerable dissatisfaction in important areas such as engineer skills, spares availability, standard of call-up and back-up support, and training—vital areas for improvement by service providers.

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As far as pricing of hardware maintenance is concerned, the report shows that the user expects an overall price increase in 1987 which is similar to the increase of 7.7% in 1986; the pattern for software maintenance follows the hardware situation quite closely.

Customer Service Pricing for Europe - 1987, makes it clear that customers are becoming price sensitive due either to the activities of third-party maintenance companies or the rising ratio of service to hardware costs, but that users are nevertheless prepared to pay for good premium services tailored to their requirements.

Therefore, the report recommends that the major players must provide balanced services by using a proper marketing and sales strategy and develop the weak areas of engineer skills, spares availability, and back-up support. Successful implementation of the above will support a reasonable increase in maintenance prices which the research behind the report has shown to be acceptable to the customer.

This report is available from INPUT at 1280 Villa Street, Mountain View, CA 94041, (415) 961-3300 or from INPUT's London office at 41 Dover Street, London W1X 3RB, telephone number 01-493-9335.

NOTE TO EDITORS: For an editorial review copy of the report's Executive Overview, contact Jan McDaniel at (415) 961-3300.

